

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area

2010 Calendar of Events

Old Christmas: Militia Muster at Fort Watauga

Saturday & Sunday, January 9 & 10

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Christmas isn't over yet! European migrants brought Old World holiday traditions to America, from the Dutch Sinter Klaus to the Twelve Days of Christmas. Discover the English, German, Scotch-Irish, and Dutch roots of our modern holiday celebrations.

Living History – Militia Muster at Fort Watauga

Saturday, February 20

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, February 21

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Visit Fort Watauga and step into a colorful Revolutionary world. Re-enactors portray a variety of characters, from hunters and farmers to land speculators and backcountry gentry. Walk among colonists and native peoples who share their past through talks, mini-dramas, and demonstrations of 18th century life.

Overmountain Weavers Guild Fibers Show and Sale

Saturday, March 13

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Don't miss this great opportunity to visit with some of the best weavers of our region! They will be demonstrating on a variety of looms & spinning wheels, and offering handmade items for sale.

Living History – Militia Muster at Fort Watauga

Saturday, March 27

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, March 28

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

In March of 1775, Cherokee delegates met with the wealthy and ambitious Judge Richard Henderson to conduct the largest private land transaction in North American history: the Transylvania Purchase. Join our re-enactors as they depict this landmark event that happened *here*, at Sycamore Shoals, 235 years ago.

Living History - Militia Muster at Fort Watauga

Saturday, April 10

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, April 11

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

By King George's Proclamation, no colonial subjects were to move across the mountains. But in 1772, the frontiersmen who had settled illegally in the Watauga Valley formed a government of their own, a "dangerous example" to the British that independence was possible! Join our re-enactors as they forge a new government: the Watauga Association, an important precursor to American liberty.

Landscape Seminar & Plant Auction

Saturday, April 24

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

An exciting array of unusual ornamental & native perennials, trees and shrubs will be auctioned during this event. A great opportunity to add new species to your landscape! Sponsored by The UT Extension Service, E.Tenn. Nursery Assoc., and the Eliz/Carter Co. Chamber of Commerce.

Community Plant Exchange

Saturday, April 24

9:00 am – 10 am

The front parking lot will be bustling this morning! Bring cuttings and potted outdoor and indoor plants, to exchange for species you don't have—a fun way to meet other gardeners and increase your collection.

Colonial Kids at Fort Watauga

Friday, May 14

Reservations Only!

Families, schools, and home school groups are invited to attend this all-day event for kids ages 8-12. Join the Washington County Militia for a taste of 18th century life: black powder muskets, old-time games, marching drills, tomahawk throwing, Dutch-oven cooking, and a host of other colonial activities. Admission is free and groups are welcome, but space is limited. Reservations are required!

16th Annual Siege at Fort Watauga

Saturday & Sunday, May 15 & May 16

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Step back to a vibrant and dangerous time...America declares Independence in the summer of 1776, and people beyond the mountains build forts, stock powder, and sharpen hatchets for the oncoming war. Walk among local legends—the vivacious Bonnie Kate, mysterious Old Abram, dignified Col. Carter, and daring John Sevier—for a glimpse of life on this “dark and bloody ground.” Colonial, native, and British re-enactors share their past through talks, mini-dramas, and demonstrations of 18th century life. Battle re-enactments both days. Contact the park for detailed schedule.

Bird Walk with the Lee & Lois Herndon TOS Chapter

Saturday, May 15

8:00 a.m

Meet other birders and naturalists at Sycamore Shoals for a morning of birding during the migratory season.

20th Year in 2010! Sycamore Shoals Native American Festival

Saturday & Sunday, June 5 & 6

10:00 am – 6:00 pm

A two-day celebration of our Native American heritage! Award-winning dancers, storytellers, artists, and scholars gather at the circle to share knowledge and demonstrate their skills. Come and discover Native American arts, music, and legends, with an emphasis on the Cherokee culture. Admissions Charge.

Living History – Militia Muster at the Carter Mansion

Saturday, June 19

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, June 20

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Re-enactors portray a variety of characters, from hunters and farmers to land speculators and backcountry gentry. Walk among colonists and native peoples who share their past through talks, mini-dramas, and demonstrations of 18th century life. This event takes place at the Carter Mansion located on Broad Street Extension.

Fine Arts Show with the Watauga Valley Art League

Month of July

Opening Reception: Sunday, June 27

2:00 – 4:00 pm

Stop by the museum at Sycamore Shoals to view the beautiful artwork of the Watauga Valley Art League. Local artists display their talents during the entire month of July. Museum hours: 8:00 – 4:30 Monday through Saturday, 1:00 – 4:30 Sunday.

An 18th Century Independence Celebration & Muster

Saturday & Sunday, July 3 & 4

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Experience the 4th of July, 18th century-style! What did colonists think about a new nation? Be a guest in Fort Watauga as news of Independence arrives to the colonial frontier. Walk among historical characters and hear their varied reactions to the Declaration, from fear of war to the hope of a brighter future. The Celebration will take place on Saturday; the muster will continue until Sunday at 3 pm.

Liberty: The Saga of Sycamore Shoals - Our 32nd Year!

Thursday – Saturday, July 15 - 17, 22 - 24, & 29 - 31 7:30 pm

Tennessee's official outdoor drama, presented by local performers against the backdrop of Fort Watauga. See the Revolution as told by the Overmountain Men: colonists who defied British law and settled on Cherokee lands. These settlers formed an independent government, made treaties with the Cherokee, defended their homes, and fought a British army at the epic battle of King's Mountain. Bleacher seating is available in the Amphitheater. Sponsored by Friends of Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area. Admissions Charge.

Watauga Valley Art League August Show

Month of August

Opening Reception: Saturday, August 7 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Each year, the August show features a new and intriguing theme. Please call the park for information on this year's theme. Exhibit can be viewed during regular park hours.

8th Annual Elizabethton Butterfly Count

Sunday, August 1 9:00 am & 1:00 pm

Meet naturalist Don Holt at Sycamore Shoals for this day-long winged adventure across town. Come for all or part of the day. Sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association & Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area. (Rain Date: Saturday, August 7.)

Carter Mansion Celebration & Militia Muster

Saturday, August 7 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, August 8 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Join us for two days of history, music, and fun at the Carter Mansion, the oldest frame house in Tennessee. Travel back to the 1770s...the American colonies struggle against Britain, and the Patriot frontiersmen gather together to celebrate Independence. See local craftsmen demonstrate traditional skills such as natural dyeing and colonial cooking.

10th Annual Sycamore Shoals Celtic Festival

Friday – Sunday, September 10, 11, 12

Friday Night Torchlight Ceremony 6:30 pm

Saturday – Sunday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Saturday Night Concert 6:30 pm

Celebrate Appalachia's Celtic heritage! Opening with a torchlight ceremony Friday Night, Clans and Family Societies will be on hand to help with family history; dance, music, food, vendors, demonstrations, reenactments of 18th & 19th Century heritage, lectures, and a special musical concert on Saturday evening. Admissions Charge.

Overmountain Victory Trail Celebration

Saturday, September 25 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, September 26 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Join us for an encampment by the Overmountain militia before the Battle of King's Mountain in 1780. Live some of the most crucial days of the American Revolution! Call the park for a schedule of events.

Night at Fort Watauga: Lanternlight Tours

Saturday, September 25 8:00, 8:20, 8:40 & 9:00 pm

By Reservation Only

Join us for an interactive adventure tour of Fort Watauga and the surrounding forest, set in the dark and uncertain years of the Revolutionary War. Reenactors in period clothing will portray a variety of characters, from fighters and hunters to spies and thieves. Space is limited on each tour, so you **must have a reservation** to attend!

Overmountain Victory Trail March

Saturday, September 25

1:00 pm (approximate time)

Members of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association have recreated the historic march to King's Mountain since 1975. On September 25, marchers will cross the Watauga River at Sycamore Shoals, just as the Overmountain militia crossed 230 years ago.

Bird Walks with the Lee & Lois Herndon TOS Chapter

Saturdays, October 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

8:00 am

Meet other birders and naturalists at Sycamore Shoals for a morning of birding during the migratory season.

Fort Watauga Knap-In

Saturday & Sunday, October 2 & 3

10:00 am – 4:30 pm

Knapping—with a “K”—has nothing to do with sleep! Knapping is the art of making stone tools, and the Knap-In at Fort Watauga is our celebration of Tennessee Archaeology Week. Watch primitive skills craftsmen make arrowheads, spear points, and other survival tools. There will be demonstrations of primitive tools such as the bow, arrow, and atlatl throughout the day.

16th Annual Sycamore Shoals Quilt Show

Thursday – Saturday September 30, October 1 & 2

8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Sunday, October 3

1 pm – 4:30 pm

This four-day exhibition, sponsored by the Sycamore Shoals Stitchers, features a show and demonstrations by local quilters held in the park museum. Bed quilts, wall hangings, holiday and baby quilts, miniatures and antique quilts will be on display.

Scary Stories at the Carter Mansion

Thursday, October 28

7:30 pm

Strange things happen around All Hallows Eve, especially at a 200 year-old mansion. Join us for tales of woe and terror, the weird and macabre, with a touch of wit thrown in for good measure. Don't be afraid, the graveyard at the Carter Mansion isn't haunted...we think!

Christmas Craft Show

Friday, November 12

10:00 am – 4:30 pm

Saturday, November 13

8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Sunday, November 14

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Don't miss this tremendously popular craft extravaganza just in time for Christmas. Forty-eight local crafts persons exhibit their talents with a Christmas twist!

Harvest Celebration & Militia Muster at Fort Watauga

Saturday, November 20

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, November 21

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

It's a jollification! The Washington County Militia musters its troops for good times and good cheer! Re-enactors in period dress provide demonstrations of old-time skills and scenes from daily life in America's colonial past.

Winterfest Christmas Tree Exhibit & Art Show

Month of December

Opening Reception November 28

1:30 pm

Kick off the holidays at Sycamore Shoals! Our Christmas Tree and Art Show opens with a reception on November 28: come out to chat with local artists and view the ever-popular Fraser Fir exhibit, decorated by community organizations. Trees and artwork from the Watauga Valley Art League will remain on display in the museum during regular park hours throughout the month of December.

Christmas at the Carter Mansion

Friday & Saturday, December 3 & 4

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Spend a candlelit evening in the oldest frame house in Tennessee, decorated with bright greenery for the holidays. Enjoy music, refreshments, and costumed interpreters acting out scenes from an 18th century Christmas.

Living History – Militia Muster at Fort Watauga

Saturday, December 4

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday, December 5

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Visit Fort Watauga and step into a colorful Revolutionary world. Re-enactors portray a variety of characters, from hunters and farmers to land speculators and backcountry gentry. Walk among colonists and native peoples who share their past through talks, mini-dramas, and demonstrations of 18th century life.

Throughout the Year

Traditional Arts Workshops

January - December

Dates and times vary.

Catch this unique opportunity to learn traditional art forms from expert instructors. Pre-registration is required in addition to an instructor and materials fee. Ask for our separate listing!

Shape Note Singing - Led by Don Wiley

3rd Sunday of each Month

2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Sing the shapes! In this early musical tradition, “shapes” represented each note of the do-re-mi scale. Although many Appalachian frontiersmen could not read, they achieved beautiful four-part harmonies through this simplified method of learning music. We invite you to join “The Old Fields Singers” for an experience you will not forget.

The Liberty Spinners

2nd Tuesday of the Month

9:30 am – 1 pm

1st Tuesday in November

9:30 am – 1 pm

This gathering of spinners and fiber artists is open to anyone interested in the art of spinning. Join us at 9:30 am on the 2nd Tuesday of each month (except November).

Northeast Tennessee Autoharp Community & Old Time Group

January – May & September – November

4th Sunday of the Month

1:30 – 2:30 Autoharp & Dulcimer Beginners

2:30 – 4:00 Open Jam

Start on the basics on Autoharp & Dulcimer, then stick around for the open jam to show off what you’ve learned! Old-time musicians of all instruments and skill levels are welcome to play! This group meets on the 4th Sunday of the month, January through May and September through November.

Sycamore Shoals Fife & Drum Corps

Saturdays

11:00 am

The Fife & Drum Corps performs at historical events, dedications, and parades. This group is open to anyone ages 12 & up. Musical experience is welcome but not necessary; just come with a willingness to learn. Meet our volunteer coordinator John Large at the Sycamore Shoals Visitors Center. Lessons are free of charge, just call and let us know you’re coming!

Friends of Sycamore Shoals Meetings

January – December

The Friends of Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area sponsors the many events here at the park. If you would like to be a part of what goes on behind the scenes, join us for our meetings! They are open to members, non-members, and prospective members alike. Call the park for meeting times and programs.

Homespun Storytelling Guild

A relaxed atmosphere that welcomes tellers, new and old, and listeners, too! Come join us as we “continue the front porch tradition, one story at a time.” Call the park for the monthly meeting time and location.

Mountain River Performances

Enjoy our wide array of guest musicians, historians, naturalists, and storytellers—and more! Check our website or monthly schedule for upcoming events.

History at Home

May - August

A creative mix of historical & natural programs presented throughout the summer by our seasonal interpretive staff. Please call for weekly schedules.

Visitors Center Hours:

8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Monday through Saturday

1:00 PM – 4:30 PM Sunday

Our Visitors Center is closed on most State holidays.

Park grounds are open from dawn until dusk.

For more information contact:

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area

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www.tnstateparks.com/SycamoreShoals/